GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5777
ANSWERED ON:30.08.2001
HARMFUL EFFECTS OF AGRO-CHEMICALS
RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the harmful effects of agro-chemicals are showing up and greater interest is being shown towards organic products all over the world;

(b) whether in western countries demand of organic produce is outstripping supplies and estimated market is about $ 10 billion (Rs. 44000 crores);

(c) if so, whether in view of environmental and health considerations, the Government is considering to have National Commission on Organic Farming with sufficient funds; and

(d) if not, the manner in which the organic farming is proposed to be promoted?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD Y. NAIK)

(a): The average consumption of plant nutrients in India through chemical fertilizers was about 95.00 kg/ha during 1999-2000. This level of consumption is not considered excessive for causing adverse effects on soils/crops. However, the Government encourages Balanced and Integrated use of chemical fertilizers, organic manures and biofertilizers for achieving optimum results.

To reduce the use of chemical pesticides Integrated Pest Management (IPM), an eco-friendly approach which encompasses cultural, mechanical and biological methods has been adopted. IPM practices are being popularized among the farmers through Farmers` Field Schools. Further, the Insecticides Act, 1968, regulates the import, manufacture, distribution, transportation and use of pesticides, for safety to human beings and animals.

(b): The demand of organic farming is on increase. However, no specific assessment of worldwide demand about the organic food is available.

(c) & (d): The Government has no proposal to set up National Commission on Organic Farming. However, the Government has set up a Task Force on Organic Farming with following terms of reference:

(i) Collection of information on Organic farming including experiments undertaken/actions taken in this field by Government/Non-Government bodies, Voluntary Organisations, Farmers Groups, Individual farmers, etc.

(ii) Assessment and propagation of appropriate techniques/technology of Organic Farming.

(iii) Setting up of standards in connection with the organic farming.

(iv) To suggest short-term, medium terms and long-term measures for development and propagation of Organic Farming; and

(v) To suggest measures for the marketing of the Organic Farming Produce.